

REMARKS

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Cheung for the courteous interview accorded Applicants' attorney.

During the interview, it was explained that the present invention, which relates to the machine production of mailpieces, is intended to minimize errors and labor and simplify the overall production of mailpieces.

In that regard, it is conventional (see Hart, Jr., et al.) to provide a control document to which is applied a specific code, e.g., a barcode, that constitutes a job ID used for identifying the specific settings to be carried out in preparing the postal item for mailing. The need to provide such a special code on the control document, or even on the postal item itself, constitutes an added step, which increases labor and increases the chances for errors to occur.

In contrast, the presently claimed invention makes use of one or more inherent item-type properties of the postal item, i.e., an inherent property which identifies the item, and uses that property for determining the machine settings. Such an item-type property could be, for example, the length and/or thickness of the item, and/or a humanly readable text inherently imprinted thereon. (The humanly readable text could be, for example, a word that always appears at a certain place on a postal item, such as the word "total" if the postal item is an invoice.) Such a feature reduces labor as well as the chances for error.

During the interview, an amended version of claim 1 was discussed. That claim has been further revised and is presented as new claim 15. Claim 15 recites, inter alia, that a machine is inputted with a reference code representing an inherent-type property of a postal item, and a setting code associated with the reference

code. The setting code identifies a set of pre-stored system settings. Then, by scanning the postal item and registering an item-type property thereof, a corresponding property code can be generated. By then comparing the property code with the reference code, the setting code associated with the reference code can be automatically determined.

Since the invention involves making use of an item-type property of the postal item, the various codes used for determining the machine settings are not attached to the postal item, as recited in independent claims 15, 24, 28, and 29.

It was agreed during the interview that such a claimed feature distinguished patentably over Hart, Jr., et al., requiring that a new search of the prior art be made. (Note: claims 15, 24, 28, and 29 are based on previous claims 1, 11, 12, and 13, respectively; claims 16-23 are based on previous claims 3-10, respectively, and claims 25-27 are new.)

It was also agreed that the rejection based upon 35 U.S.C. §101 would be withdrawn.

In light of the foregoing, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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